

**PUBLIC WORKS & FACILITIES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2014
TIME: 7:00 P.M.
MUNICIPAL BUILDING
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MIDDLETOWN CONNECTICUT**

Members Present: Chair Carl R. Chisem
Councilman David Bauer
Councilman James B. Streeto
Councilwoman Sandra Russo-Driska
Councilman Thomas Serra

Staff Present: William J. Russo, Public Works Director
James Sipperly, Licensed Soil Scientist/ Water & Sewer Department
Bruce Driska, Inland Wetlands Commission/ Zoning Enforcement Officer
Joseph Carter, Inland Wetlands Commission

Others Present: Dhruv Kekare, Student Representative

Chair Chisem opened the Public Works and Facilities Commission Meeting at 7:00 p.m. He requested a motion to approve the minutes dated May 14, 2014. Minutes were seconded and approved unanimously.

It was requested by one of the councilmen that the approvals for 5d and 5e will be moved up after Public Comment. Motion was made to accept the change in order. Motion was seconded and approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CORRESPONDENCE

- a. Notice to Proceed – Long Hill Road Reconstruction – Director Russo stated that the project will start from Randolph Road to Pine Street on June 30, 2014.
- b. Notice to Proceed – Hunting Hill Drainage Improvements – Director Russo stated that this project is ready to go. A lot of work with the Department of Transportation was done with the planning of it.

Chair Chisem made a motion to accept all of the items under the Correspondence and was seconded by Commissioner Russo-Driska. Motion was approved unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

- a. Building Permit Refund – 118 Carmela Drive – Chair Chisem made a motion to approve the refund and was seconded by Commissioner Russo-Driska. Motion was approved unanimously.
- b. Letter from Historical Society – Usage of Palmer Field Parking Lot – Debbie Shapiro, Executive Director of the Middlesex County Historical Society, requested the usage of the Palmer Field Parking Lot for the Middlesex County Historical Societies 29th annual antique car show and Flea Market.

Director Russo stated that there is no football going on that weekend and Debbie Shapiro wanted something closer to the center of town rather than using Crystal Lake.

Chair Chisem moved approval for usage of the lot. Motion was approved unanimously.

- c. Resolution For Bulk Waste Fund Budget – Director Russo stated that this budget comes during this time of year because the council has to adopt what is considered illegal dumping. Finance stresses that the commission comes up with a broken down budget for each fiscal year. When the expenditure budget started, it was at \$550,000.00 which has since decreased. The bulk waste pickups are \$75.00 which residents are thrilled about because they do not have to take time off of work.

One of the commissioners mentioned that the scrap metal prices made a rebound and wanted to know if \$21,000.00 is the best that can be done. Director Russo indicated that Kim O'Rourke studies the best alternatives to see where the most money would be made. Most of the valuable scrap metal is brought to vendors by the residents of Middletown to make money, so most of it doesn't make it into the cities hands.

Chair Chisem moved approval for the Bulk Waste Fund Budget. Approval was seconded by Commissioner Russo-Driska. Motion was approved unanimously.

- d. Butternut Hollow Pond – Director Russo asked the commission via a prior email to take a look at Butternut Hollow and how green it gets. The Department of Environmental Protection stocked it with trout and catfish this year, which increased the fishing activity there. Every year, the pond grows green with algae. A company was contacted to begin the process of treating the pond.

James Sipperly of the Water & Sewer Department stated that Diana Doyle is seeking money from OPM to help with the improvements for the pond. Butternut Hollow Pond has been increasingly turning green with algae and worsening in water quality over the years due to the warm water occurrence in the summer months. He stated that a water fountain should be added to the pond to aerate the water which adds oxygen. This will get the water moving and lessen the amount of algae.

Oxygen is needed for good bacteria to break down excess nutrients and prevent sludge from occurring at the bottom of the pond. If a body of water does not move, oxygen cannot saturate the water. This results in the breeding of algae and bacteria which will also make the area a breeding ground for mosquitos, making the West Nile Virus a concern especially to all of the nearby children. If the water is rippling or moving, it is less likely for mosquitos to land on it and breed. The flow of the water will also cut down on unwanted odors.

There is a lot of nitrogen in the pond as a result of the geese that are feeding around the area and leaving their feces in the water. It is a proven fact that if native species of bushes are planted around the pond, the geese will not land in the pond. An initial treatment of environmentally friendly herbicide will be done as soon as possible. There will be a total of three treatments to prevent any algae or bacteria from reoccurring.

Director Russo stated that he is going to do some research on the treatment of the pond so that he can set aside a line item in the budget to cover it for next year. The treatment for Butternut Hollow

is in the Parks budget which totals \$4,250.00. The Pond and Lake Connection will do all of the permitting at the DEP. The park is looking good, but the pond is unsightly. Once it is proven that actions are going to be continuously taken to improve the pond, it will be stocked annually. Director Russo also mentioned that Diana Doyle was confident that the funds can be supported through town aid. The aerators will enhance the area by increasing the cleanliness which will also increase the fish population.

Chair Chisem made a motion for approval of the Butternut Hollow Pond enhancement. This includes the allowance of a modification to the motion for reimbursement from the state. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- e. Spear Park – Director Russo updated the commission on some of the issues which include the loitering and drinking by some of the nearby residents. He wants to know if the fountain should be turned back on or if it should be made into a grassy area where you can see the park, upgrade the lighting and put some classical music on to resemble the tunnel. The Housing Authority owns the park so before any work is done, it would have to go through them.

Director Russo indicated that in order to bring the fountain up to compliant, all of the controls for the electrical would have to be moved above-ground which would cost around \$13,000.00. The lights would cost around \$12,000.00 and the classical music would cost around \$4,000.00. If it is decided to have the fountain removed to make a grassy area, the estimated cost would come to about \$22,000.00-\$32,000.00. The sidewalks would be left remaining, as well as the lighting. There is not much funding to complete the project, but something needs to be done as far as demolition and refurbishing to enhance the park.

Chair Chisem stated that he will not support the project at this point in time. At the second Public Works & Facilities meeting, it was stated that an analysis is needed on every single park in the city. The park renovations need to be prioritized to come up with a financial plan to fund everything.

It was suggested by one of the commissioners to make a move to postpone the discussion of Spear Park renovations until the director from the Middletown Housing Authority can be present.

Director Russo is going to see if this can be added to a parks study to see how the projects can be funded.

A motion to postpone the discussion on Spear Park was made. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- f. Proposal for Park Improvements – Director Russo stated that Milone & McBroom comes highly recommended from Parks with the projects they have done. He doesn't want to have too many firms giving their opinions. It is hard to keep up with the product because of the demand of the games.

The parks conditions will be evaluated in relationship to the demand for the use of the athletic fields as a more holistic approach. Recommendations will be made that will include concept plans and budgets.

Director Russo asked the commission to think about bridge lighting which would cost around \$850,000.00 to light. The commission agreed to consider the option if the state helped out along with Northeast Utilities, Portland and Middletown.

A motion was made to move forward with all of the additions for the park improvements with the consultants. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

- g. Green Street Arts Center Chiller - Director Russo stated that the Green Street Arts Center needs a new chiller. He believes that there was a valve that could have been rusted which made water travel into the chiller.

Commissioner Russo-Driska mentioned how it still needs to be added to the agenda first. Chair Chisem moved that the agenda needs to be amended to add the item to it. Commissioner Russo-Driska seconded the amendment and the commission approved.

Councilman Serra made a motion to front the money to repair the Green Street Arts Center chiller. It was suggested to check and see if it can be paid for out of LOCIP or get reimbursed through LOCIP. It will then be forwarded and presented to the Finance & Government meeting. A motion was made to approve the funding for the Green Street Arts Center chiller. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

- a. May 2014 Overtime Report – The commission reviewed the overtime report.

Director Russo stated that the department is working on being more efficient with less overtime to effectively put the overtime budget to use.

One of the commissioners asked why the road bond work cannot be completed during regular hours. Director Russo stated that when roads are being worked on, the department tries to fix them as quickly as possible so that the rest of the town and projects can be taken care of without being held up by one road.

- b. May 2014 Building Permits – The commission reviewed the building permits.

Chair Chisem made a motion to approve the reports as submitted. Motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

OTHER

- a. May 2014 Monthly Report – Highway Division – The commission reviewed the monthly report.
- b. May 2014 Weekly Reports – Parks Division - It was requested by one of the commissioners if one more individual can be hired for the Parks Department to help out with all of the overtime that is worked. Director Russo stated that he will look into it around the budget time. He recommends that it should be held off until the new turf on the fields is installed; the amount of time spent cutting grass will decrease significantly.